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DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/FO DAS GASTRIGHT, SCA/A  
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG  
NSC FOR HARRIMAN  
OSD FOR SHIVERS  
CENTCOM FOR CG CFC-A, CG CJTF-82 POLAD

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SUBJECT: PRT CHAGHCHARAN: SEMI-ANNUAL GHOR REVIEW

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Ghor enjoys a stable security situation overall; most current issues stem from local land and tribal disputes. Pasaband and Taywara Districts remain vulnerable to Taliban elements based in Helmand, evidenced by several incursions this spring. A shortage of ANA and ANP contributes to the problem. The lack of infrastructure development, primarily roads, hampers economic growth and isolates the province for most of the winter. The slow pace of development has angered many Ghor residents and threatens the long term stability of the province. Former Governor Afzali had worked closely with the PRT and NGOs to improve security, governance, and development, but his replacement by General Baz Muhammad Ahmady has raised concerns in the Ghor development community. End Summary.

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SECURITY: STABLE, BUT OPEN TO TB INFILTRATION  
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2. (SBU) The security situation in Ghor is stable, but recent Taliban incursions into Pasaband and Taywara Districts highlight the vulnerability and limits of the provincial government. There are no ANA troops in Ghor and only 900 ANP, most of whom are still being trained, need more weapons, and only recently received vehicles. General Shaah Jahan Noori, Ghor's ANP Chief, works closely with the PRT CIVPOL and Police Mentoring Program (PMT) trainers and has expanded the police training programs offered in Ghor. The PMT, with Noori's support, created an ANP training team qualified to instruct ANP staff in basic police operations. The team now deploys with selected Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) and PMT staff to train ANP personnel at the district level. The district police chiefs and PMT report that the ANP training team performed well in recent missions to Dowlatabad and Dolina. After prompting from PRT police advisors, Noori moved more equipment and fuel to the districts, a move that has increased the district chief's law enforcement capabilities. Noori continues to complain about police pay and pace of reform, telling the PMT that his officers may strike if reforms are not enacted soon. He believes too many ANP personnel are being excluded and will not be

retained, and he wants some control over which officers should be kept in Ghor.

13. (SBU) There have been no attacks on the PRT or personnel (which operate throughout the province), but low-scale local conflicts over tribal and land issues remain a problem. These incidents create opportunities for Taliban influence and permit provincial power brokers to exert their muscle. General Ahmad Khan Morghabi in the north and Dr. Ibrahim Malekzada in the south are the strongest power brokers. Their continued influence highlights the limits of provincial authority. Ghor authorities lack the means to move against their drug trafficking activity or illegal weapons stockpiles.

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POLITICAL - NEW GOVERNOR NEEDS TO EXTEND REACH  
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14. (SBU) The replacement of Governor Shah Abdul Ahad Afzali with General Baz Muhammad Ahmady in June raised concerns among an already anxious development community in Ghor. Afzali was concerned about the slow rate of development in the province and welcomed greater NGO and PRT involvement. Residents of Chaghcharan supported Afzali but pressed his office to secure more assistance for the province. The line ministries, which have few small staff, have limited development funds, and were reluctant to request additional support from Kabul. The Provincial Council meets and has worked closely with the PRT and USAID to formulate an initial draft of its Provincial

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Development Plan. Ahmady's major challenge will be to extend his authority over the province, increase the population's support for the provincial government, and secure more development assistance.

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ECONOMY - LACK OF ROADS, SKILLED LABOR SLOWS  
DEVELOPMENT  
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15. (SBU) Ghor is one of Afghanistan's poorest provinces and is in desperate need of development. The challenges are enormous. Poor road infrastructure isolates the province for most of the winter. Most residents have no access to electricity and the majority work subsistence level agriculture. Few NGOs work in Ghor, and the lack of skilled labor restricts even small-scale NGO development plans. NGOs recruit Herat or Kabul residents to fill skilled positions, resulting in high staff turnover. Several NGOs are trying to build Ghor's human capacity, but this is a slow process. There are no large scale development projects at this point and many residents are frustrated with the central government and international community for seemingly neglecting their province.

16. (SBU) Ghor's stable security situation works to its advantage by allowing the smaller projects, which may be most appropriate given the small dispersed population, to be implemented. PRT, NGO, and USAID projects have created hundreds of jobs in Ghor, and modest economic growth is visible in the province and district centers. In Chaghcharan, dozens of new houses are under construction. Shop owners report that business is very good, with construction supplies selling fast, but complain about the lack of electricity and the need for more kamaz cargo trucks to haul supplies from Herat or Kabul. The large livestock bazaar in Chaghcharan is busy, and the supply of livestock has increased after a harsh

winter. Farmers expect a good year.

17. (SBU) Ghor's stable security situation is also reflected in a growing school population and increased the demand for school tents, buildings, and teachers. The Department of Education (DOE) reports Ghor needs at least 240 school tents and 1000 teachers, but it recognized the challenge of attracting qualified teachers to the province. The DOE has hired hundreds of temporary teachers to fill the void, but most lack higher education and training. The DOE claims that only 50 new schools have been built in Ghor and wants NGOs and the PRT to make school construction a higher priority. Two schools in the Saghar District were reportedly burned in June - DOE and ANP say these events, even if confirmed, are rare in the province and they work closely to protect the schools.

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COMMENT  
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18. (SBU) The lack of infrastructure development and a skilled workforce are the greatest challenges facing Ghor. Increased USAID and NGO funding will be in place in 2007-08 but implementation will remain difficult and slow. Sustained PRT- and NGO-initiated development will continue to expand the moderate economic bump in the population centers. The change in governor could create political challenges but the new administration inherits a functioning Provisional Council and excellent PRT-government working relationship. If Governor Ahmady is prepared to support PRT and NGO development programs and works to strengthen provisional authority the security, Ghor's slow but steady progress will continue.  
WOOD